

Woman suffrage. Hearing before the Committee ... February 18, 1902

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WOMAN SUFFRAGE. HEARING BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Tuesday, *February 18, 1902.*

The committee met at 10 o'clock a.m., Hon. John J. Jenkins in the chair.

The Chairman . The Chair desires to state this morning to those ladies who are present to speak in favor of the joint resolution that the chairman of the committee, Mr. Ray, is absent. I am satisfied that had it been possible for him to be here he would have been here, as he is very much in sympathy with what the ladies desire to say this morning—much more so that the present occupant of the chair. The clerk will report the resolution.

The clerk read the resolution, as follows:

[House Joint Resolution 18, Fifty-seventh Congress, first session.]

JOINT RESOLUTION Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article be proposed to the legislatures of the several States as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which, when ratified by three-fourths of the said legislatures, shall be valid as part of said Constitution, namely:

"Article—

"Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

"Sec. 2. The Congress shall have power, by appropriate legislation, to enforce the provisions of this article."

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt. Mr. Chairman, we have just been holding an International Woman Suffrage Conference in the city of Washington, with eight nations having sent official delegates from

woman suffrage organizations, and with several other nations cooperating with us in this regard, through correspondence, and so we have invited representatives of these nations to come to you this morning, in order to present some facts concerning the practical operation of suffrage in other countries than our own.

Our first speaker will be Miss Vida Goldstein, of Australia.

STATEMENT OF MISS VIDA GOLDSTEIN.

Miss Goldstein. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee, it gives me very great pleasure indeed to come here to-day and plead the enfranchisement of your splendid American womanhood. When I think of what the women of America have done for the cause of woman all over the world, and especially for us women in Australia, I feel it is a great privilege to stand here to-day and join with these ladies in asking you to seriously consider their claim to enfranchisement.

I am proud to think that I belong to a country where the woman-suffrage movement has made such wonderful progress—Australia. We feel we owe a great deal to your American women, because years ago they fired the enthusiasm of our men and women in Australia, and for the last twenty years we have gone on gaining in suffrage here and there, and in a very short time all the women in Australia will be enfranchised. And because we have proved over and over again the utter hollowness of all the arguments against woman suffrage, I should like to tell you in detail the political status of the women in Australia.

It seems almost incredible that here your women have not school or municipal suffrage to any extent. I understand you have school suffrage in twenty-five States and municipal suffrage in only one. In Australia we have had the municipal and school suffrage since before I was born, and it has worked splendidly. Women not only vote for the school boards, but they are eligible for seats thereon, and we have in many of the largest cities in Victoria a number of women serving on the school boards. At first there was the most strenuous opposition to their taking those seats, and no end of evil things predicted as the result. It was said that it would break up the homes. Of course these predictions did not come true, they were disproved, and now every school board election results in an increased number of women occupying seats on the school boards.

Since children are supposed to be women's particular care, surely it is only a matter of common sense that women should have some say in the management of school affairs, and the men who act

with women on the school boards in Australia are the first to acknowledge the benefits which accrue by placing women on the boards.

Women have had the municipal suffrage for between thirty and forty years in Australia, and that also has been a great success. Women are not eligible for seats on the municipal councils in Australia—they are in New Zealand—but they vote in very large numbers indeed at the municipal elections; indeed, their vote often outnumbers the vote of the men. Over and over again the electoral officers have told me that the women seemed to evince greater interest in municipal affairs than men do, and when we think that municipal councils have not to deal with as interesting questions as Parliament, it is fair to say that if women had the parliamentary vote in all the States in Australia they would vote even more largely than they have voted in the municipal elections.

The position is this in Australia: Having had the school and municipal suffrage for so long, and both having worked so well, it has made the woman-suffrage movement make very great progress indeed, and in two of the States, or in three of the Australasian divisions, women have full parliamentary suffrage. In New Zealand, in South Australia, and in West Australia this is the case. In other States, Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania, for example, however, the suffrage bill has been introduced again and again in the legislature. The representative house of Parliament, the lower house, has an election every three years, and every election shows an increased number of those in favor of woman suffrage returned to the house.

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The bill has been introduced eight times in our legislature and passed each time by an increased majority in the lower house, and the reason it has not passed into law is the opposition of the upper house, which is not representative. The upper house is not elected by the people, but only by a portion of the people, and this upper house in each State has simply sat there and blocked this bill each time. The habit of blocking these bills by the upper house of Parliament has become such a scandal in Australia that reform bills are being introduced in almost every State. There is a deadlock between the two houses of Parliament on the subject .

Just before I came away it was announced by the government that a reform bill would be introduced this coming session—this month, I believe. That reform bill will include woman suffrage, and there is no doubt it will go through.

Some years ago—four years ago, I think—Mr. Reeves, the agent general for New Zealand, spoke at a large meeting in London on the subject of woman suffrage in New Zealand. He finished speech by saying that he was absolutely convinced that the success of woman suffrage in Australia and New Zealand had been so marked that within a few years the other States in Australia would see their

women fully enfranchized; and how true his feelings was is proved by the condition of affairs in our newly federated Australia. The elections for the Federal Parliament were held last year, and in every State four-fifths of the members returned were pledged to vote for full woman suffrage. That proves what I said; that the reason we do not get full woman suffrage in the other States is because of the position of the upper houses, which are not representative. Both houses of the Federal Parliament are elected by the people, and as four-fifths of these members are pledged to vote for full suffrage, we are bound to get it. Both those houses elected by the people have a large majority of their members in favor of the suffrage.

In South Australia and West Australia and New Zealand the women take the greatest interest in the parliamentary elections, and the elections are as quiet and orderly as you can imagine. You have used the same arguments against giving women school and municipal suffrage that have been used in Australia against giving them parliamentary representation, and so far from these things being true—these predictions as to the result—the opposite is true; they do not neglect their homes; they do not leave their babies uncared for or seek public office, and the whole thing has been so remarkably successful that we can boast that in our new Federal Parliament we have this vast number of members representing North, South, East, and West Australia in favor of full woman suffrage. That bill will be introduced almost immediately. They are fighting over a tariff bill now, and in order to press the matter the government intends introducing the bill in the senate almost immediately.

I have a paper here which is published by the Anti-Suffragists' Association, and there is in it an article on woman suffrage in New Zealand, and of course it is against it. The source of their information is Mr. J. Gratton Gray, "a journalist long resident in Australasia." Australasia is as big as the United States, and to quote a journalist as an authority on woman's suffrage in West Australia or South Australia or New Zealand because he has been long a resident of Australasia is just as sensible as to quote a journalist long resident in the United States as an authority on woman suffrage in Colorado.

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This journalist, "J. Gratton Gray, long a resident of Australasia," says:

Not only was woman suffrage not fulfilled any one of the improving and refining services which were claimed for it the increase was before Parliament, but as an absolute fact, public and political life and the personnel of our Parliament itself has degenerated to a most deplorable degree ever since the introduction of the female franchise at parliamentary elections in that colony.

Now, I speak from knowledge in this matter, and unhesitatingly say that those accusations are not true. And in order to prove my statement I want to read the opinions on woman suffrage in New Zealand and South Australia by some of their leading men and women, clergymen, and doctors, and

lawyers, and so on. I have not quoted members of Parliament because people opposed to woman suffrage always say, "Of course they say they are in favor of it, or they would not be returned." So I will simply quoted the opinions of these other representative men and women. This, I think, is better than giving my own opinion of how woman suffrage has worked.

It has raised the tone of political life, since a better class of men are returned to Parliament. It has raised the tone of election meetings. An election meeting nowadays is as quiet and orderly as any ordinary public meeting. All the saloons are closed on election days, and a place where liquor is sold not be used as a polling booth. Every election sees an improvement in the quality of the women vote.

When I refer to the saloons being closed on election day, I would like to remind you that we have not prohibition in any of the States where we have woman suffrage. That is one of the strongest arguments used against woman suffrage; that if women are allowed to vote, all drinking places will be closed and we will not be able to get any of these interesting beverages. That is not so; it has not proved true in Australia. The women hold just as divided opinions as the men do on the subject of prohibition, but what they do seek is a better regulation of the drink traffic, and every sensible men is for the same thing.

The statement made in the Victorian legislature that the granting of the suffrage to the women of New Zealand has resulted in the election of men of immoral character to seats in the house of representatives is not true and is an undeserved reflection upon the women of this colony. The moral tone of the present house of representatives is equal, if not superior, to that of any of its predecessors, and the legislative assembly and council of Victoria might with advantage take a lesson in regard to decorum and procedure from New Zealand. It goes without saying that a candidate whose moral character is tainted or who has not been good to his wife and children will never the women's vote. This fact is well known and has a restraining influence in preventing men otherwise qualified from standing for seats in Parliament. As a matter of fact, they will not face the ordeal.

It is largely owing to the women of New Zealand that it is in the van of progress and social reform. The enfranchisement of the women of New Zealand was the result of years of hard fighting. Success crowned our efforts in the end, and the result has been so satisfactory that you never hear any suggestion that these rights should be taken from us.

It has distinctly affected legislation. Laws have been made because of it; others have been modified. Changes have been made in the administration of the public service; changes are being made in public opinion outside the public service.

These, as I say, are the opinions of representative men and women, and I venture to say they are much more reliable than the opinions of "a journalist long resident in Australasia."

To be personal for a moment, I happen to have a municipal vote in my State—I have only had it for a few years—and it has made a very great difference in the way I am looked upon by candidates and canvassers at election time. Now they come to find out my opinions on 5 municipal questions and evince the greatest interest in my views as to reforms. I never found that attention paid to me before I had a vote.

On election day I go to the polling booth—a room something like this day. They told us that when women would get a vote they would lose the chivalrous attention of men. Instead of that being the case, election day is the one day when it is brought home to us most clearly that the age of chivalry is not dead. On that day the gentlemen show us every attention at the polling booths; they send carriages to our homes for us, no matter if we live only three minutes' walk from the voting place. Those things do not happen on any other day.

In all the Australian States women all be shortly fully enfranchised.

I forgot to tell you the position in regard to our federal constitutional bill. The sentiment in favor of woman suffrage was so pronounced that when the federal constitutional bill was framed they had to insert a clause providing for woman suffrage. The franchise was to be based on the franchise existing for the popular house in each State, and, further, the rights possessed by the electors could not be taken away from them. The suffrage must, therefore, be made uniform throughout Australia, and, being uniform, it must be based on the widest suffrage we have, which is in south Australia, where women have not only the right to vote, but also the right to sit in parliament.

It has been said that if women were given parliamentary suffrage they would want to go into Parliament. We have had a vote in South Australia for six years, and no woman has ever desired to enter Parliament. If Australia can trust its women, certainly America ought to be able to do the same, and I ask you gentleman to trust your American women. If you do so I am sure they will prove worthy of the confidence you place in them.

Mrs. Catt. Although I have been in the United States a resident of four different States, and a taxpayer in each of these at the time of residence, and able to pass the qualifications, I have never

been permitted to vote for the smallest thing, and yet I have the privilege of introducing a Russian woman has been a voter in her country ever since she was 21.

STATEMENT OF MADAM SOFJA LEVOVNA FRIEDLAND.

Madam Friedland. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, in a country like Russia, with an absolute government, there is but little suffrage for either men or women, but the little there is equally share by men and women. We do not, of course, vote for our czars; neither do we vote for our governors, but the municipal officers are elected by votes of real-estate owners regardless of sex. The woman does not vote in person. She transfers her vote to her husband, her son, or her son-in-law, and in case these persons are unable to vote for her, she has the right to delegate her vote to a stranger—a thing I have done a great many times.

It is an independent vote. He simply has the proxy, and votes as the woman voter dictates.

Russia, whose political institutions are the least liberal in Europe, has the most liberal laws in regard to the civil capacity of her women. Every woman in Russia, married or single, if she is of age, enjoys perfect civil capacity. Marriage does not in any way change the rights of husband and wife over the property they possess or may acquire. The husband has no legal right whatever over the property of his wife, and his wife is by no means under his guardianship.

This may account for the fact that we have less divorce than in many other countries. We have different laws for the different social classes. A nobleman will pay his taxes according to the law for the nobility, while his wife may be a commoner and have to pay hers according to the laws for the commoners; but both are taxpayers and consequently both are voters. The women of the people, the peasant class, do not care for tradition, and election day for them has certainly the same meaning as for the men. It is quite a common thing to see a woman of the people, a peasant woman, take her place, and often her husband's place, as the husband has a right to delegate his vote to her; and she not only takes his place at elections, but she may take it at county meetings and assemblies of every kind.

Lately, the self-government of the peasantry have made an attempt to deprive the women of the right to hold office, but the senate has prevented them on the ground that if a woman shares the physical burden, shares the hard struggle for existence, with the men, as they do in our remote rural districts, she must also share their privileges.

Mr Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I hope I have your sympathy for the ideas practice in our country for our women.

Mrs. Catt. It is eminently proper, Mr. Chairman, that following Madam Friedland, Mrs. Emmy Evald, of Sweden, should address you, for the women of Sweden have voted longest of any women in the world.

STATEMENT OF MRS. EMMY EVALD.

Mrs. Evald. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, here I stand before this legislative power of America, representing a county where women have voted since the seventeenth century, which was sanctioned in 1736 by our king, and I stand here as a foreign delegate representing men of Parliament, men of aristocracy, and men of prominence of Sweden.

The Swedish women stand as the first women who have been granted enfranchisement, for Swedish women voted before any American man ever voted; and this striking fact, says a Norwegian authoress, is unquestionably due to the liberal sentiments which Swedish men entertain for women themselves as well as for their case. The men gave suffrage to the Swedish women without the women requesting it, because they believed that taxation without representation is tyranny. Were men what they should be, women would not need to demand their freedom; they would have it without demanding it, as the women of Sweden have it to-day.

The taxpayer's vote in Sweden is irrespective of sex. Women have voted there, as I have said, since 1736 for every office for which their brothers do, and on the same terms, except in the suffrage in the second chamber of the Riksdag; but the women have their municipal vote, school suffrage, voting for the delegates of the provincial representatives, and thus indirectly to the elections of members of the House of Lords.

The first chamber of the Riksdag will in the near future gain this point, and a bill for this is pending in the house.

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I wish I could have brought this bill here to show it to you, to show to you the, names of the prominent men and the prominent women who have signed this bill. I will this afternoon at the conference have this bill with me and I will then show you these names printed in the Swedish paper. In this connection, I wish to say that in compliance with a request from the national American Woman Suffrage Association to write a short synopsis upon the workings of woman suffrage in

Sweden, the truth of my statements was challenged by an editor of one of your newspapers. I did not know what to say, I was so astonished that the statement of a delegate coming to such a convention should be questioned, and told him that I was sorry I did not have with me the printed statutes. For fear that my statement in regard to woman suffrage in my country might be questioned here to-day I have brought these statutes with me, and if anybody doubts any of the statements that I have made I would be very glad to show these to him.

The Government appreciates women's work in Sweden, and has openly declared that they could not do without them in municipal affairs. And I would like the men here to go to Sweden and ask the men there if it has ruined womanhood because she has voted there for for two centuries.

Women are admitted to the postal service in Sweden and on equal salaries with men.

In the railway service, which is controlled by the Government, women have ever since 1860 been employed in the controlling office and ticket department, and in the telegraph service and in the telephone service, which is also owned by the Government. In fact, the telephone and telegraph service are controlled and worked by women. I wish to say here that Leah Alvorn, who obtained a Government office in 1853, succeeding her father as engraver of medals at the Royal Mint of Sweden, coined many foreign coins and engraved the jubilee medal which was issued by the city of New York in 1876 in commemoration of the Declaration of Independence of the United States.

In 1809 the women of Sweden were given rights of inheritance. In the same year they were given equal matrimonial rights. The colleges and universities in my country are open for women, and they get degrees the same as men. All professions are open to women except the clerical professions. We have women teachers, and women are pensioned equally with men.

Let me make a little comparison. Tax-paying women in Sweden have voted in church matters since 1736. Every woman is taxed in the Lutheran Church in America, but she has no voice, no vote. And they blame the Americans because the clergy educated in America have imbibed the false spirit of liberty, of freedom, and justice taught by illiberal men in America.

So you see this movement for woman's rights is greatly needed here. You can not trust the ballot into the hands of women teachers of the public schools, but you give it to men who can not write! I am sorry that my time is up, Mr. Chairman, as there are a number of other things I would like to call to your attention.

We hail the day and hopefully look to the future when American women will be declared equal to men judicially as well as socially, as citizens, and as human beings.

STATEMENT OF MRS. GUDRUN DREWSON, OF NORWAY.

Mrs. Drewson. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, Norwegian women look back upon the 25th of May as the day of a great victory, for on May 25 last year a bill was passed in Stortemgurt, our parliament, which grants municipal suffrage to all women paying taxes on a certain limited income, about \$100 year, or whose husbands pay taxes on such income.

This law has thoroughly changed the married woman's position in Norway. From having always been a minor the married woman has suddenly become of age.

It may be of interest to you people of the United States, who can show so many tax-paying women without any right to vote—it may be of interest to you to know that we were not able to get the men of our Parliament interested in the tax-paying woman's question until the bill was put up in such a form that it included the married women also. It seemed to hurt these men's family feelings—it seemed to them so unjust that the wife and mother should still be standing idle on the market place while their aunts and sisters were the only ones to reap the harvest.

But, having the bill placed before them in its proper form, our men of Parliament seemed to like it so well that not only the radical party, who had presented the bill, but many of the conservative party, who have for years been diffident, also gave their votes, and made strong speeches in favor of woman suffrage.

The result of this law has been the elections of several women to important municipal positions; for instance, members of the common council in the capitol, members of the board of aldermen, and at one place a woman has become chief assessor. Women may act on juries and grand juries, and have been appointed members of special Congressional commissions. Several women doctors have been appointed in public institutions, on boards of health, as experts for the Government, and so forth. Matrons have been employed at prisons where women are detained, and special prisons for women, in charge of a matron, have been established.

On the whole, we begin to see the glory of the rising sun which will give us within a little while the bright, clear day.

Mrs. Catt. We have some other papers to be read. Miss Isabel Campbell, daughter of former Governor Campbell, of Wyoming, the man who signed the bill that enfranchised the women of that State, will now read a paper.

STATEMENT OF MISS ISABEL CAMPBELL, OF WYOMING.

Miss Campbell, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee: Where equal suffrage has prevailed the longest the testimony to its good results is the most unanimous. In Wyoming it has existed for thirty-three years. For the past fifteen years the suffragists have had a standing challenge inviting the opponents to find in all Wyoming two respectable persons who will assert under their own names and addresses that equal suffrage has had any bad results whatever. The opponents have thus far failed to respond.

For the good results of equal suffrage there is abundant testimony from competent witnesses.

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Every Territorial governor of Wyoming for twenty years testified that equal suffrage worked well. Governors of Territories are appointed by the President, not elected by the people, hence their testimony is impartial. After twenty years' experience of woman suffrage in the Territory, Wyoming incorporated it in its constitution, by a large majority, when it became a State.

The Wyoming house of representatives in 1893 passed by a unanimous vote a resolution testifying in strong terms to the good results of equal suffrage, and the last Wyoming legislature, in 1901, put itself on record by a resolution to the same effect.

A long line of chief justices, judges of the supreme court, prominent educators, and clergymen of different denominations unite in giving similar evidence.

In Wyoming it has for many years been the law that all men and women in the employ of the State, including public-school teachers, shall receive equal pay if they do equal work. Equal suffrage has raised the age of protection for girls to eighteen, and has brought about the repeal of the law which formerly licensed gambling. Child labor is prohibited, and education is so well cared for that among the Wyoming volunteers for the Spanish-American war there was not one who could not read and write.

For the claim that this is the result of the actual, active participation of the women in politics we have the word of Wyoming's secretary of state, who says nine-tenths of the women vote.

It has been said that equal suffrage would make quarrels in families. Equal suffrage was granted in Wyoming in 1869. During the twenty years from 1870 to 1890 divorces in the United States at large increased about three times as fast as the population. In the group of Western States, omitting Wyoming, it increased nearly four times as fast as the population. In Wyoming it increased only about half as fast as the population—a relative decrease.

It has been said that if women we allowed to vote political excitement would cause nervous diseases and lead to an increase of insanity among women. After ten years of equal suffrage the census shows that in all Wyoming there were only three lunatics, and those three were men.

An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory.

Mrs. Catt. The next in order is Colorado. It will be presented by Prof. Theodosia Ammons, a professor in the Agricultural College of Colorado.

Miss Ammons. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee and fellow-citizens, in reporting for Colorado I think it unnecessary to speak of the history of the cause there, as it is so well known.

I wish to present the state of affairs since women have been given the franchise.

Several bills have been passed in our State legislature and these have been toward reform and have certainly been beneficial. Among these was the raising of the age of protection to 18 years, the establishment of a home for dependent children and incorrigible girls; also giving the mother equal right with the father to the children. I would say that these bills have, some of them, been presented by the men and some by women in the legislature. In Colorado, as is not generally known, we have a broad and wide sentiment in favor of real equality. We have dropped that spirit entirely which has existed 10 in some places of dividing the two great parts of the human family, and we cast no reflections upon one or the other but are marching forward together. It has been asked many times as to whether or not the women have really established these reforms—whether their vote has been powerful in this direction. I would say that, as you all know, the men still vote in Colorado. Women are not trying it all by themselves, and so we can not say exactly in regard to that. We do know, however, that a very large percentage of the women of Colorado vote.

I have had the honor of being chairman of a committee which investigated this subject, as to the number of women who voted at one of our elections, and I give you the result as it is—that a very large percentage of the women vote. And we do know that they are interested in all reform movements in the State. We have had several members of the house of representatives from the ranks of the women. Up to the present time we have had no member in the State senate. We have

not tried to place one there. Our idea was to do as much as we could in placing the right kind of people in office, and we were just as desirous of placing good men there as we were of placing good women in those positions, and up to the present time we have made no attempt to elect a woman to the State senate.

We have had several women who have occupied the position of superintendent of public instruction of the State, and we think that they have been a credit to that office.

One of our chief lines of work has been the work of the women on State boards of charities and correction; and I can say very positively that all of the questions that are raised against woman suffrage have been answered in Colorado, and answered in a way to show that this great movement is a good thing, and that it has succeeded in the great aim which was intended for it.

It has been said that the voting places would not be improved. I say emphatically that they have been. I have voted now for several years and I know that everything is carried on in a proper and correct manner, and, as I have said before during this past week, one of these voting places out in the country, where I had the privilege of voting, reminded me very much of a camp meeting in the South—it was orderly, quiet, and serene.

In answer to the question that woman suffrage would probably reflect in a serious way upon the home, I would say that we have established it as a fact that the women are keeping home as the center and are trying to make it stronger and better in every way than it ever has been, and that the political idea is not invading the home to the detriment of the home, but, on the contrary, there is going out from the home a sentiment that is for the betterment of the State.

Mrs. Catt. Idaho will be represented by Mrs. Ida M. Weaver.

STATEMENT OF MRS. IDA M. WEAVER, OF IDAHO.

Mrs. Weaver. Mr. Chairman and fellow-citizens, that women do vote is an established fact. I was unable to find the statistics to get the per cent, but I made inquiry among the leading politicians of our State before coming here, and they assured me that as great a percentage of women vote as men. It was thought that they would not vote if given the ballot, but we find for a fact that they do vote. 11 There are conservative women whom we thought we would never get out to the polls or who would not register, but if a dear friend or member of the family is running for some office, we find that they register and vote, and after that there is no trouble. They see there is not the bugaboo about the polls that they were told was there.

As to the personnel of the women who lead in our State, I wish to state that I have never felt it was beneath my dignity, although my husband is a State officer, to go out and work actively for what I believe to be right. Our mayor's wife is a leading member of our woman's political club, and Senator Shoup's daughters were also active in the last campaign, one being secretary of the Woman's Republican Club; and there are a great many other prominent women I might mention who take an active interest in politics.

It was said, too, that the immoral women would come out and vote and offset the good results that the women might do. But in our own City of Boise it is very difficult to get that class of women out, and if a candidate dares to put up money and get them out late in the day, his political life is doomed, because all the women of all parties will unite to see that he does not use that element to secure success.

We do take an interest in the primaries, although that is the only criticism I have ever heard on women suffrage that might stand for a moment, the statement that we do not take an interest. I have often heard that statement; but do men take an interest in primaries? Have men learned that that is the beginning of good government? We are going to learn if that is so. We do not know, but we are learning and learning rapidly.

We have political clubs and we keep them up the year round; during the campaigns we study the issues of the campaign; we have debates; we do not look on the one side only in a blind way but we look on all sides, and in the interim between the campaigns we study the issues of the day, and I assure you that the women of Idaho are closely watching every bill that goes through this legislature.

We have our opinions upon the questions that come up just as you have your opinions here. We study them, debate them in our political clubs, and during the political campaigns we have our headquarters and we know who has registered, whether the women have registered, and if they have not we find out why not; and if there is a why not we send the women who may have influence to those women and get them out. We get them out to register. Of course, then it is easy to get them to vote.

We are careful as to the character of our candidates. I have had the honor to be a delegate to conventions, and they say, "But will the women stand by this one if we nominate him"? They say, "Is his character such that the women will rally to him"? They know we will array ourselves against wrong, and on the side of right. So they always ask that questions.

We had, a short time ago, an improvement and a nonimprovement ticket in Boise. Women rallied to the improvement ticket and elected it, regardless of political favor.

We have a superintendent of public instruction who continues to succeed herself, which proves she is fitted for the position.

In twenty-one counties of our State we have fifteen county superintendents of schools. We have had three women in the lower house of the legislature, and they did their work there beautifully, and, so far 12 as I know, no criticism was offered. They were conscientious and hard workers. At one time it was may pleasure to go into that lower house and see a woman in the chair. The chairman of the house had been called out of the room and they called this woman to the chair, and she presided with as much dignity as any man could have, and we were proud of her.

Also, our governor has seen fit to appoint one of our aristocratic and wealthiest and most beautiful women on the State board of regents of the University of Moscow, which we think is an honor to our State and an honor to our sex, proving that the governor thought she was fitted for the position.

Women have sat on juries. You know that was the great bugaboo— “Oh, if they get the right of franchise they will have to sit upon juries.” What if they do? They have done it, and the right has prevailed according to their ideas. They have been conscientious and refined, and no objection whatever has been raised in these enfranchised States. It is only outside where they do not know about it that they raise objection.

Nothing has come up of a rigid character against the saloons except that the men look out that they are kept in place. We do not have to do that, because the women are watching licenses, and the saloon keepers know if they step outside of the bounds of the law the women will be after them.

We have an antigambling law, which is enforced for the same reason above mentioned.

I thought to come here and tell you that woman suffrage is a great success in our State would not perhaps bear much weight, but I have a letter from the chairman of the Democratic centra committee, and I will give you a little of what he says:

The splendid work that your organization has been doing for the cause of Democracy and reform is highly appreciated by the State committee.

You see, then, that it speaks for itself, that our work is appreciated by the men.

Your influence during the present campaign has been very marked, and the party owes your organization a debt of gratitude.

That Ada County is debatable ground is largely owing to the loyal efforts of the members of your organization. We think if Ada County is carried, or the Republican majority materially cut down, the credit belongs largely to your organization.

On behalf of the committee I again tender the members of your club my sincere thanks. With assurance of our high regard we are—

And it is signed by the secretary and chairman of the Democratic State committee.

I also brought with me a letter from Governor Hunt. It is as follows:

It gives me pleasure to say briefly that the extension of this franchise to the women in Idaho has positively purified its politics. It has compelled State conventions, but more particularly conventions of both parties, to select the cleanest and best material for public office. Many conventions in this State have turned down their strongest local politicians for the simple reason that their moral habits were such that the women would unite against them regardless of politics. It has also accomplished another thing in my State, and that is it take politics out of the saloon to a great extent and has elevated it, especially local politics, upon a higher plane of morality and fitness for office. Every woman is interested in good government, in good officers, in the utmost economy of administration, and in a low rate of taxation.

Very respectfully, yours, F. W. Hunt, *Governor*.

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I also have a letter from Mr. Hays, and he says:

In response to your request for my views on woman suffrage as applied to this State, I will say that it has been in operation for over four years, and there have been no alarming or disastrous results.

I think most people in this State, looking, over the past objections to the extension of the right of suffrage, are now somewhat surprised that any objections were ever made.

As to advantages, it is, as in all matters of this kind, difficult to measure them exactly, because the benefit is largely indirect. I think, however, that it has exercised a good and considerable influence

over conventions, resulting in the nomination of better men for office, and that it has been of considerable weight in securing the enactment of good laws.

This is from the superior justice in our State, Judge Quarles. He says:

The adoption of equal suffrage has resulted in much good in Idaho. The system is working well, and the best result therefrom is the selection for public positions, State, county, and municipal. Our politics in the past have been manipulated by political adventures, more or less, without regard to the best interests of the people, but principally in the interests of a small coterie of politicians of the different parties, who have depended upon the public treasury for subsistence. The participation of our women in the conventions of our various political parties and in elections has a tendency to relegate the professional politicians, at least the worst element, and bring forth in their stead a better class of people. This tendency is of vast importance to the State. It compels leaders of political parties to be more careful in the selection of candidates for different offices of trust and profit.

I am very glad to bring these things to you and let you know what the men say, and in closing I say I vote not because it is my right but because it is my duty.

STATEMENT OF MRS. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT.

Mrs. Catt. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, we have with us a delegate from England who was to have spoken this morning and who will undoubtedly arrive later but who is not here now.

I have a favor to ask of this committee in an official capacity. It is something we have never asked before. We realize full well, and understand enough of human nature to know, that it is not a question of the actual merit of woman suffrage which must be considered by the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives. We realize that there are questions of politics behind it all, and the first consideration must, because of our peculiar political organizations, be the life and the policy of the political parties and the consent of the constituencies behind its members.

In a degree we have a sympathy with this position, and we are going to ask something of you which will make it a little easier than to give a favorable report upon our bill.

Since we never have had a favorable report from but one Judiciary Committee we have grown to be rather hopeless about the Judiciary Committee; but we hope, however, that we may ask something in which you may be able to concur.

Ever since the days of the Declarations of Independence, which declared that life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness were inalienable rights, that fact has become a conviction not alone with all Americans, but with all the people of the civilized world.

It does not take very much consideration, nor a very logical mind, to perceive that the ballot is the only possible way of maintaining and 14 defending those inalienable rights. It does not require a very logical mind to see that whenever the ballot is denied to a class of people the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness is alienated by tyrannical power. This is putting our case in a very simple fashion, but it is the conclusion to which the world will arrive in later years. We believe that the gentlemen of this committee are quite as much in sympathy with the logic of that position as we are ourselves; but we realize the political reasons why you might not act in accordance with that conviction.

We therefore have brought to you something of the testimonials of the success of woman suffrage in operation throughout the world, but yet I think you will realize if any man among you were called to stand before a judiciary committee in any house of representatives of the world, and to give in five or ten or fifteen minutes some proof of the operation of man suffrage, you would find it a very difficult thing to do; and you would find that your own presentation of that argument would be far from satisfactory to you. Therefore, the thing I ask in behalf of our association is that this committee will ask the House of Representatives to appoint a commission to investigate the results of woman suffrage in operation. This has never been done. We find that when our people come before you and read the testimonials of prominent citizens in favor of woman suffrage that it is but natural, as I see from the expression of the faces of one or two of you, that you think at once, "Of course, any man in politics would say that woman suffrage was a good thing when the women were a portion of his constituency." It is but human nature, and from that point of view there is at once put upon all such testimonials a cheapness which robs them largely of their authority.

And further, since women vote in the same ballot boxes with men, since the registration is very difficult to separate, since the men register under names which are women's, and since women register very often under their initials, it is difficult to separate them. And while by investigation it has been shown that fully half the votes in Colorado and 45 per cent in Idaho at the last Presidential election were cast by women, although in both of those States the per cent of women is much less than the per cent of men, nevertheless these statements are not convincing.

The thing that has made us ask you this is a lesson that we have ourselves received. Last June a gentleman came from Belgium, Mr. Fernand Deschamps, who was a professor in the university at Antwerp. He was a gentleman of high scholarship and attainment, opposed to woman's suffrage;

but he came to this country on behalf of his Government to make some investigations in regard to our educational system, and at the same time he came as delegate from the Sociological Society of Belgium, of which he was the secretary. He came with expenses paid for the express purpose of investigating the operation of woman's suffrage in this country, and he came to investigate it because in Belgium there is a very strong movement in a very curious fashion looking to the enfranchisement of women.

You will remember that in 1893 in response to the agitation of the sociologists of Belgium universal suffrage was granted to men. That suffrage, however, was in part a proxy vote. Every man was given a vote, but every man who paid a small tax and had a wife was given two votes upon the ground that he was the head of a family, and in a 15 sense it was a recognition of the woman in the state. If he paid a considerable tax, on what would be about \$2,000 in our money, or if he had a university degree he was permitted to have still another vote. So that any man might qualify to have three votes. The Catholics are in power in Belgium. You know Belgium is a Catholic country and the Catholic religion is the established religion.

Now, it so happened that the people who possessed the university degrees and the majority of the property of Belgium were Catholics belonging naturally to the old conservative families of Belgium. Therefore, the Socialists discovered that they had gained very little in their vote, inasmuch as they were outvoted by these proxies. They have therefore instituted a new movement and their watchword is "One man, one vote." In reply, in a spirit of retaliation to that demand, the Catholics in power, the government (for government there means a different thing, of course, from what it means with us and it is a more permanent thing, that is, the power that speaks is a more permanent thing) said:

If you compel us to take away the proxy votes and give to each man one vote, then we will retaliate by enfranchising the women.

Therefore this man came to us to investigate the working of woman suffrage; himself a Catholic, as the representative of the sociological society (but I must confess to you that with careful observations on his movements I was convinced that he was not the representative of the sociological society, but that he was the representative of the government itself). That gentleman spent several months in this country. We knew always where he was; we knew where he went and what he did. He visited Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Kansas, and Massachusetts. He visited the prominent citizens in those States; he went to men in the privacy of their own offices, and the executives in their own chambers, where they would not feel that they were pledged to testify to him in behalf of the success of woman suffrage, since there was no constituency to hear what they said.

He went prejudiced, but when he turned to New York and gave us something of a résumé of the results he found, he testified that his mind, his reason, were convinced of the justice of woman suffrage, although he said his feelings were still opposed to it. But he declared that he failed to understand how the United States could deny the right of suffrage to women when the fundamental principles of our Government were considered. He told us that in Wyoming he had only been able to find one solitary man who said to him in private that woman suffrage had not been a success, and that one man was a saloon keeper.

In the State of Colorado, where the women have voted so long, there was more difference of opinion, but he said whenever a person testified in favor of woman suffrage that person always had facts to give in support to his opinion, but whenever he found a person opposed to it that person had no facts to give in support of that position, but simply expressed the old feeling of antagonism which had always been his.

Now, gentlemen, in view of the fact that no man in all the world holds his right to the suffrage for any other reason than because "Taxation without representation is tyranny," and because "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," 16 and in view of the fact that women of this country are taxed and are governed, there is no human being who can devise a logical reason why the women of this country should remain disfranchised.

And we ask enfranchisement because the demand is logical and just. We do not ask it because the unanimous vote of the women of this country is in favor of women suffrage, for, gentlemen, I ask of you when in the history of the world have the men of any country been unanimous in their demand for suffrage? Never once. And when we are asked to bring the approval of a majority of women, we are asked for a proof of our fitness, which was never demanded of men. When women are enfranchised, however, we find that they exercise that privilege quite as generally as do men. We find that they exercise it as intelligently. We find that they lose nothing of their womanliness. We find that instead of broken homes, the homes have grown happier. We find that there is a larger womanhood and fatherhood as the result of it, and there is, in consequence, a happier and more progressive State.

In view of the fact that the appeal we make is a logical deduction from the fundamental principles of our government; in view of the fact that when women have been enfranchised they have used this privilege; in view of the fact that we have come to you for the last thirty years to make our appeal and never but once have even had a favorable report to Congress; in view of the fact that you turn your backs upon us as soon as we are gone, as though we had not come with an unanswerable

petition to your; in view of all these facts we ask of you only this: To consider our question a live and important one.

You have sent commissions to Cuba to investigate conditions there, in order that you might know best how to govern the Cubans; you have sent commission to the Philippines in order to know best how you are to govern the Philippines; you have sent commission to Porto Rico in order to know best how to govern there; you sent a commission at one time to Sweden to investigate the operation of their liquor system; you have sent commissions wherever there was anything to be learned that could add to the usefulness of our Government; and now, gentlemen, the thing we ask is only a petition in line with growing civilization. For you must understand that we, who are the units of this Government as well as the men, we, who are its taxpayers, we, who help to bear the brunt and burden of this Government, regard the spread of woman suffrage in other countries with consuming humiliation while our own Government is silent.

We do not understand why when petition is made to foreign parliaments that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," those Parliaments listen to that plea, and answer by enfranchising the women of the world; while the men of America, the descendents of those who initiated that immortal principal, turn a deaf ear to our petitions. Yet, we do know why it is; we know that there is a sort of skepticism surrounding universal suffrage; we know that there is a corruption growing up in American politics which makes you hesitate. But, gentlemen, there is no expediency to justice, and if it is right for men to vote it is right for women to vote.

If there is any guaranty by which any member of this Judiciary Committee holds his interest in the Government, then we have exactly that same guaranty. I for one do not blame men or women who hesitate about enfranchising women, because the thing you hesitate 17 about is not the thing we ask; it not the reality, but it is your imaginary idea of what woman suffrage is. And because this imaginary idea controls the Congress of the United States we ask you in the interest of fairness, in the interest of progress and civilization, to see to it that this commission is appointed to investigate suffrage in our four States. We ask you to investigate it in exactly the same spirit of calmness, the same spirit of scientific investigation which you would give if you were investigating man suffrage in Cuba.

We ask you to discover there whether the women exercise they privilege that is given them. We ask you to discover whether they register; what proportion of them vote after they are registered. We ask you to discover whether the bad women control politics. We ask you to discover whether the women who are intelligent have sufficient patriotism to make them exercise their privilege in the highest degree of intelligence. We ask you to discover whether homes have been broken up. We ask you to chase down to its lair every single charge and objection that has been made to woman

suffrage. And, gentlemen, if when an honest commission has returned an honest investigation you discover that woman suffrage has proved a good thing, if you find that woman suffrage has proved as beneficial to women as man suffrage has proved to men, then we shall expect that another Judiciary Committee will give a favorable report upon our bill and ask Congress to submit a sixteenth amendment.

And if you discover that it is not a good thing, then I promise you in behalf of our association that we will turn our guns into those States and see that it is made a good thing. [Applause] For never so long as there are women on the face of the earth who are educated, women who think for themselves in this or any other country, will they rest content until they have the only weapon that governments can give them for defending in that government their liberty and pursuit of happiness.

They tell us the ballot is not an inalienable right. We care not what it is. We know that liberty and the pursuit of happiness are called inalienable rights. We know our liberty has been alienated from us because we have not had this privilege. If the ballot is a right, then we ask why it should not be extended to women, where is the reason? If it is a privilege, as some say, then we ask why should not women enjoy it? If it is a responsibility, we ask why should women be exempted from it? If it is a duty, why should not women be made to perform it?

This is our position, gentlemen. We stand before you citizens of this Government, qualified, intelligent, tax-paying women, who demand for ourselves the same right to make the Government under which we live that has been given to you.

And now, gentlemen, I see our delegate from England has come in, and I will ask Mrs. Florence Fenwick Miller to speak for a few minutes on the suffrage of women in England. [Applause.]

STATEMENT OF MRS. FLORENCE FENWICK MILLER, OF ENGLAND.

Mrs. Miller . Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I have been asked to specially direct my attention in the brief remarks that I shall have the pleasure of offering to you to the position of women in England. I hope you, as members of a republic, will be ashamed to hear that the monarchy of England gives its women citizens a very great many rights which you deny to them; that it has given us those rights for so many years that they have become so natural to us that nobody talks about them. When I am asked to give you testimony as to the smooth working of the women's vote in regard to all local affairs, I am at a loss to know what to say, because that is looked upon in our country as so natural a thing that there is not friction; the whole runs along so naturally and smoothly, just like breathing the air in a thoroughly healthy state of the lungs, that there is absolutely

nothing to be said about the way the woman's vote works. Men and women vote on equal terms for the candidates whom they consider most suitable, and the women's vote is as much an ordinary matter, of course, as is the vote of her male neighbor.

The local government of England is divided among a number of different bodies. Some of them have different functions, but are called by different names simply because they take in different sections or different kinds of divisions of the country. We have the school boards, which were established in 1870, and which have the management of the elementary education of the country, which is now compulsory and free. The school boards spend very large sums of the taxpayers' money. For the school boards every woman who pays taxes herself has a vote. Upon the school boards any woman whom the electors choose to elect is entitled to take her seat.

There are at the present time not only hundreds of thousands of women voting for the school boards, but there are 276 women sitting as representatives upon the school boards of England. And how great a success their work has been shown to be may be inferred from the fact that on the first school boards that were elected in 1870, when our educational act passed, and school boards first came into existence, there were but 16 women. Those 16 women have grown to 276 at the present time, who sit upon 236 separate school boards in different parts of the country. I should perhaps remind you that all representatives, Parliamentary and other, are unpaid in Great Britain, and both men and women members of boards work from public spirit or for the distinction of the position. Women members are elected by the votes of both women and men.

I myself have for nine years been a member of the school board of London, sitting for one of the great divisions of London, called Hackney, which has 60,000 voters. My election committee was composed of men and women. Men worked for me very hard indeed. It was men who in the first instance approached me and asked me to stand as a member. But at the same time the people who were most deeply interested in my return were the women voters. Whatever may be said about the interest of women in public affairs, I can give you my personal testimony that they are the most keenly interested in putting other women, when they think them suitable, into positions of responsibility and trust. For the election of members of the British school boards every woman who pays taxes in her own name has a vote for the representatives; and any woman, married or single, who offers her services to the electors, and whom the electors choose to return, is allowed to sit as a representative.

The next great local governing body for which women vote is the boards of guardians of the poor. These bodies have the management of the relief of the poor, and they spend annually about \$127,000,000, 19 which they raise from the taxpayers, men and women. The whole country is covered with magnificent edifices, in which the aged, the destitute, the helpless orphan or deserted

children, the incurable sick—and, I am sorry to say, a certain number of the able bodied poor also—are taken in and maintained at the public expense. These are huge organizations. Many of the workhouses contain over 1,000 persons; besides which outside relief, in money or food, or medical aid, is given to persons more or less destitute and partially incapable of earning their livelihood. For board of guardians the women taxpayers vote the same as men. Every woman who is a taxpayer can vote for a member of the boards of guardians.

And besides that women are eligible to sit on the boards of guardians on the same terms as men. There are very nearly 1,000 women—986, to be exact—now sitting as members of the boards of guardians. There is Government testimony, published only two years ago by one of the Government inspectors, to the great and universally recognized value of the presence of women on the boards, and the influence of women on the voting; he says: “The ancient prejudice against ladies sitting on boards has disappeared before experience of the good they do.” And it is a fact, which no one will deny who knows the facts, that almost always when a women offers herself for election she is elected, and when once the electors get hold of a woman member on a board of guardians they find her so useful that they do not let her go, so long as she will continue to serve.

Many of those ladies have been returned again and again and again. The first woman elected was in 1875. In 1901 there were 986—close to 1,000. The first one in 1875. In 1901 nearly a 1,000. Sixteen women school board members in 1870. Two hundred and seventy-six women school board members in 1901.

Gentlemen, do not these facts speak for themselves? I need not go hunting around for the testimony of one or other individual, however influential and important. The fact that the public has gladly returned more and more women to these boards, the fact that there is nobody who has a word to say against the smooth working of the women's vote for those boards are facts which are not denied, and are more important than any personal, individual opinion could possibly be.

Those are the chief boards upon which women sit, although there are some smaller boards, with which I need not trouble you.

But, besides, women may vote for the municipalities—for the town councils. I can offer you any illustrations of how the women's vote has improved these councils, for the simple reason that when the English Parliament instituted those councils, in 1869, the English Parliament, gentlemen—the Parliament of a monarchy—was sufficiently large-minded to perceive that women ought to vote for those councils; that women have to pay their taxes, and that where a woman stands at the head of a household she is not only equally entitled to representation in regard to the spending of her money, but that also she is as much, if not more, concerned with the work that the councils have to do as

any man. And it was so obviously just that the women taxpayers should be represented on those bodies, that when they were constituted in 1869 women were given the right to vote upon them, and have exercised that right ever since.

I may here say that of course you probably know suffrage in England is not universal. Therefore, as regards women also, it is not universal. But the qualification is the same for the men and the women. It is the qualification in the main of being at the head of a house, of being a taxpayer, who has to meet the demands of the tax collector when he comes around, and that person who pays the tax, whether a man or woman, is clearly entitled to have a voice in the expenditure of the taxation. But besides that, many of the questions which come before a municipality especially affect women.

There is no "woman's party" or caucusing in these elections; men and women are equally interested in good government and vote side by side according to their view of the best solution of the questions before them. Very often those questions are not trifling. When good members have been chosen and are administering affairs well enough, the electors, men and women, are apt to be rather indifferent about voting in local elections. There are large numbers of men who never use their votes, but the women vote as fully as the men do.

What I could do if time permitted, and if it seemed necessary, is to tell you how very, very much the detailed administration of England has been improved under the councils for which women have voted. The sanitary condition of England has enormously improved. We have added five years to average life of the human being in England; and, by the way, the women who live so much in the homes have added two more years to their lives than the men have, showing that the great improvement that has been made in the sanitation of the home under the town councils for which women vote has resulted in a great improvement in the system of our town's government, and especially in regard to matters affecting the public health. The sanitation of our cities, the general management of them, the construction of our roads, of our water supply, everything that has to do with the home, has been immensely improved since those bodies were founded for which women from the very first have had to vote, and for which they vote so smoothly and so much as a matter of course that really we now think hardly anything about it any more, as I say, than we think about drawing in our breath when we are in perfect health.

The other councils are very similar. We have district councils and parish councils, also the county councils, which have to a considerable extent the moral and intellectual government of the cities under them—the licensing of places of amusement, the public parks, the providing technical education for young people after school age, and so on. Such matters as the building of homes for the poor, the oversight of lunatic asylums, and various things of that kind, they have under their authority. These were established in 1884. When they were established, of course the women

who had voted so smoothly, so properly, so well, so naturally, for twenty years previously for school boards and for town councils, of course they were given the right to vote for the new county councils. Nobody ever thought that anything else could be done. When the county councils were established for all these purposes, for looking after the lunatic asylums in which there are so many women, and for carrying out the acts about baby farming, and for what I might call the moral government of the county, as well as much general public business, women, of course, were given their votes in the election of the members.

Women also had, so far as Parliament's intention went, the right to sit upon those councils, and in the first London county council election 21 three ladies—that presented themselves to the electors—were returned to sit upon the first London county council. But one of the defeated men, who did not like it, looked over the act of Parliament and thought he saw his way to get the seat—though the electors had rejected him—ad so in fact he did. The act of Parliament had been carelessly drafted, and it was possible for the judges to say that they held women no entitled to sit. In the clause that stated the rights of voters it was distinctly stated that women taxpayer should have the right to vote. But in the section that laid down the qualifications of representatives, only some such expression was used as, "All taxpayers shall be eligible," and it was not distinctly said over again that that meant women as well as men; and our judges held that as women were not there specifically mentioned, and as they were specifically mentioned in the clause that gave the right to vote, that showed that they were not entitled to sit. But as a matter of fact it was intended by Parliament that the new bodies should have women members as well as women electors, and nobody denied it. The electors had returned the only three ladies who presented themselves. Those three ladies did admirable work.

I have here testimony to that work, and I have also the record provided me by the chairman of the London county council, through his clerk, of the number of times that the council itself has formally passed resolutions to send up petitions to Parliament to let women sit upon those boards; but Parliament is busy and has not found time. I repeat that nobody for one minute dreamt that women should not vote when those councils were established. It was made quite certain they should vote, as they vote in all other elections except parliamentary. They vote smoothly. Every woman who pays the county council taxes has the right to vote for the men who are going to expend those taxes, and there can be no sort of doubt that the efforts of the council have been more directed to moral and social improvement, because behind them was the vote of women. Technical education for girls has been cared for as well as that of boys; public amusements have been made decent; there is no blot on the record of our council, and its most active members will tell you that much of the better element owes its being to the assurance that the women electors will sympathize with such a director of efforts. Of course it is rather difficult to understand all these councils if you are

not in the midst of them, and the only thing I want you to take away with you is this—that in every election, without exception, in England, for every public body, save in that for the legislature alone, women have a vote on the same terms as men, and I do want to make you a bit ashamed that you Republicans are so much behind us in that respect.

In regard to our newest established bodies, the London borough councils, they were established to take the place of an old set of governing bodies, called the vestries. The vestry is the oldest known governing body in England. It used to be a collection of men and women of the village who met altogether and settled the affairs of the village then and there by vote on given questions. Now London has grown big, and it was found that the vestries had become cumbersome, and it was determined to revise their arrangements and have them elected in the way in which all other bodies are elected. When that bill, called the London local government bill, came before Parliament 22 in 1899, nobody anywhere thought for one moment of anything else but the women taxpayers having their representation on it. There was not a word of question about that. There were the taxpayers; there was the body which was going to spend their money and govern them; and of course everybody recognized that those women taxpayers would have their votes. There was some question, however, whether they would be entitled to sit upon those councils. The question was raised in the House of Commons. The London county council took the opportunity to petition that women should be allowed to sit on the English bodies about to be formed, and in the House of Commons repeated divisions were challenged, and every time the House of Commons decided that women should sit.

Nobody ever even challenged our right to cast our vote, and the House of Commons again and again decided that women should have their rights to be mayors, aldermen, and councillors, under the new local government act, in the bodies which were to replace the vestries. The House of Lords threw that out; not the voting power of women—even the House of Lords did not think of refusing women their franchise—but merely the right to be elected as representatives. The ground was not that women had not done well as members on these boards. On the contrary, the occasion was marked by the Marquis of Salisbury, our premier, who is a great thinker, as well as our leading statesman, making a splendid eulogy on the record of women as representatives. He said that women had shown themselves more in touch with the true needs of the working classes than men; that they had added earnestness and public spirit to all boards on which they had sat, and had been in every respect, irreproachable workers for the public benefit. Lord Londonderry, as chairman of the London school board, added his personal testimony to the value of the public work of women.

But the House of Lords—the privileged House that has steadfastly resisted and cut down to its utmost limit of courage all the increase of the liberties and powers of the nation, and denied men

their franchises till the county was brought to the verge of revolution in 1831 and 1867, when my lords yielded to their fears what they had refused to their humanity—this obstructive House refused to ratify the decision of the people's that women should be members of the new board. But not even the House of Lords attempted to take away the woman's ballot. Gentlemen, the work of women in English public life has not only been unattended with any mischief but has been a great force for service and benefit. Surely American men can trust their sisters as our men have for the past generation trusted us to their own as well as our advantage.

Mrs. Catt. We rest our case with you at this point; and let me repeat in closing that we make the request of having the arguments which have been presented to you placed in print, and while we are here in support of the bill, with the hope that we might have a favorable report, and yet since "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and we have not had that favorable report for so many, many years, our hope is small; and therefore we make the request that you will urge Congress to make an honest investigation as to the truth of the statements we have made to you.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, we rest our case.

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The Chairman. The committee will determine this question of printing while you are here.

Mr. Littlefield. You would like to have some of these hearings to circulate, would you not?

Mrs. Catt. We would.

Mr. Littlefield. How many, please.

Mrs. Catt. We had 5,000 once; I wish we might have that number again.

(Upon motion the committee decided to print 10,000 copies of this hearing.)

(Thereupon, at 11.40 a.m., the committee adjourned.)